

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 178

APRIL, 1936

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MONTH BY MONTH

THOU SHALT NOT KILL. To-day, two miles from this office, and almost as we write, a bound and helpless woman, mother of five children, has been done to death at the orders of a British minister. British law perpetrates one atrocity to punish another—Italy's excuse, is it not, for poison gas? And the *Daily Express* openly gloated yesterday that the wretched woman would be hanged. Thus do British justice and the leaders of public opinion help us on the road to barbarism! To-night British audiences in ten thousand picture palaces will enjoy the shootings and the gangsterism which has displaced the more wholesome music hall; national sport, too, becomes more brutal—one team finds its goal naked to its enemies for every goalkeeper is on the injured list; war talk has driven the weather from its acknowledged place as the Britisher's super topic; and so we could go on. The butcher—war—is not yet ready, but they are fattening and preparing the lambs for the slaughter! What a world we live in! What a task Socialists have in front of them! Far, far bigger, we opine, than the mere teaching of our economic creed and palliative proposals.

LONG LIVE THE IDEAL. While on this topic may we regret the decay of altruism in many of the Socialist teachings of to-day? The British Socialist Movement was essentially altruistic in origin. The British Labour Party was not, and it is no offence to state the truth, that Trades Unionism is not in essence or in origin altruistic. But in the first twenty-five years of the Labour Party's existence there were forces within it which leavened its propaganda with idealistic ideas. These things are gone, and indeed was it not the chief dreamer who was the

Judas Iscariot in 1931? That, of course, doesn't condemn the dream! The Labour Party to-day does its own propaganda and its own thinking, and, as a consequence, one wonders sometimes whether its Trades Union origin and Trades Union preponderance have tended to extinguish the flame of idealism. Anyway, what Party pamphlet writer dare put much of it in a pamphlet, or in a Party publication? And what Committee dare venture a policy report which isn't eminently practical? Our latter-day practicability and prosaic pose may be all right, but do not you, my reader, and lots of others, sometimes thirst for the zeal, the fellowship and the wonderful visions that to-day are lost in prose?

Perhaps we have penned a thankless and unnecessary couple of paragraphs. Therefore let us turn to Youth.

THE WAY OF YOUTH. We imagine that the Annual Conference of the League of Youth has faced the National Executive with a pretty problem. Reviewing the work and development of the League of Youth over recent years, the National E.C. felt that the League would be stronger if it were confined to Youth with a capital "Y." The National E.C. consider that legal age makes a difference; that those who are over twenty-one are adults, and those who are under are the genuine thing. The N.E.C. therefore propose by steps to exclude the older members till at last the Leagues of Youth consist entirely of those under twenty-one. And in common truth can it be contended that young people who have attained to men's and women's estate, who earn adult money and have voices and positions in the adult movement really ought to have another voice—a voice expressing *Youth* desires? We suppose that some are married; are householders, perhaps with a couple of chil-

dren: can these tax- and ratepayers truly express what Youth thinks, especially if they have accepted a state which places them on a citizen equality with their fathers? Anyway, the Youth Annual Conference, thought all under twenty-five should remain and they rejected the N.E.C.'s proposals. There is no suggestion that those between twenty-one and twenty-five should choose either between adult functioning or Youth functioning, and so the problem remains one to be settled quite likely by N.E.C. decision. Others matters indicate that League Branches are restless, but nobody seems to apply themselves to the problem which we raised in our February issue regarding the instability of League Branches. Sooner or later the whole problem of the Labour Party's handling and organisation of young people, and of the children, will have to be considered afresh. And then we may see some far-reaching changes.

GET YOUR MONEY READY.

Abroad, at any rate, these are days of quick change. In this country we still look placidly forward from one election to another. Some bold spirits already predict a General Election long before its due time, and, indeed, if foreign crisis after crisis continues to occupy the world's stage for another year or so without the accident of war, it might happen that a General Election would fall in after the Coronation. Well, if it did, are you ready? One of the ghastliest facts about the 1931-35 period was that D.L.P.'s simply would not get ready to fight, or set about raising election funds in earnest. The result was woefully inadequate finances in many places, and the creation of debts which will take a long time to pay off. Here is a paragraph from the Annual Report of the Hendon Constituency Labour Party which shows that there is a changed attitude to this problem. We commend the advice given to all our readers. "With regard to the financial difficulties experienced, we think the quota plan an excellent one, but it is suggested that the contributions should be spread over the years preceding an election (amounts being paid quarterly, half-yearly or annually) instead of requiring a bulk payment at the time of the election. This would enable

ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES ENDORSED BY N.E.C.

25th MARCH, 1936.

- DEVON: Exeter.—Mr. John Cripps, Goodfellows, Lechlade, Gloucestershire.
ESSEX: Saffron Walden.—Mrs. C. Rackham, 9, Park Terrace, Cambridge.
Lincs: Rutland and Stamford.—Mr. Arnold Gray, Ingelby Hall, Nr. Saxilby, Lincs.
LONDON: N.W. Camberwell. — Mrs. Freda Corbet, 97, Balham Park Road, S.W.12; Westminster, Abbey.—Mr. W. S. Kennedy, 45, Penywern Road, Earl's Court, S.W.5.
NOTTS: Newark.—Mr. A. W. Sharman, Thurlby, Bourne, Lincs.
SOMERSET: Wells.—Mr. W. J. Waring, 108, Kenmare Road, Bristol, 4.
WARWICK: Birmingham, Yardley.—Mr. Charles Jarman, 5, Ducray Drive, Ralston, Paisley, Renfrewshire.

That Labour Monthly

The Editor of one of our regular monthlies, on resigning his voluntary post, writes:—

"I am writing to thank you most sincerely for the splendid way in which you have produced the paper, and done all you could to help during the past few years. If ever I move from here and have anything to do with starting another Labour Monthly, I shall certainly see that it is printed at Ripley, if you can manage it. But I am hoping to stay here and to watch the 'Labour News' grow into quite a big fellow.

With every good wish,
Yours sincerely,

(The original letter can be seen by the Editor of the L.O. or any enquirer.)

The foregoing was received in February by
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your Officers and Election Committee to do their work more efficiently, and with real knowledge as to what they were able to expend."

SECRETARIES—

HERE'S TO YOU

Enquiries continually reach us, and the Labour Party too, for standard writing paper, account books and even minute books. Fact is these matters can be obtained so cheaply at local stationers that it does not pay to produce in standardised form. Postage on such items is also comparatively high.

Secretaries' requirements in the way of stationery and equipment differ tremendously. The big and powerful Party demands an office, telephone, clerk, typewriter, duplicator, perhaps an addressing machine, and usually large stocks of stationery. The little Party can afford no more than will pack into a soap-box. In the early years we ourselves used soap-boxes even for Labour Party filing.

Every Secretary, big or little, ought to make an effort to keep his correspondence and records tidy. Don't store up old out-of-date circulars, but do please keep correspondence for a reasonable time and when destroying same copy out useful addresses. Secretaries with much correspondence require folders for each correspondent (about 1½d. each) but a foolscap box-file will suit the needs of secretaries of smaller branches. Deep boxes can be obtained if desired with alphabetical indexes.

Secretaries who work from their home address, and they are the overwhelming majority, should make a big effort to keep all Party papers and properties in one place. We have seen some sad hunts for missing items. On one occasion the Party's rubber stamp was retrieved from Sonnie's pocket, and on lots of occasions the whole house has had to be hunted over, upstairs and down, to find what was required.

We commend to the use of Secretaries the type of box or trunk often used by Trades Union branches and

left in their meeting rooms. Such a trunk would be lockable, and could be easily made by the handy man of the Party. Better still let it be made as a cupboard to stand upright. Imagine what a lot of trouble would be saved if all the Party's books and properties were thus to be found compact and all together.

What Secretary is there who does not sometimes feel ill at ease over the mass of correspondence he takes down to a meeting, and brings back unread. The reason, of course, is that a meeting is impatient of long communications. But a meeting unfortunately is no judge of what is important and what is not important until the correspondence is read. It is the Secretary's duty to go through everything received so as to be ready to summarise the contents of any document. Few Secretaries can do this well, and the best device we know of is for the Secretary to make a few notes summarising the purport of long communications. He must, of course, take the communications to meetings because after hearing the précis the meeting may desire to hear more. It is a safe plan to submit all correspondence to the Chairman before a meeting and let him approve of the précis.

Again and again proposals are made at Party meetings to set up a special Committee for this or that purpose. Usually the Secretary, viewing the multiplicity of meetings and committees, plumps for the matter being referred to the Executive, and in the main this course is right. *Ad hoc* Committees may occasionally be necessary, but generally they lead to overlapping. But beware. Proposals for setting up special Committees have in our experience generally been an indication of distrust in the activity or ability of the Executive Committee and officers. Don't let this reflection be justified.

Many Secretaries with ability in practical directions nevertheless find themselves at a loss when called upon to write a business letter. We have seen some woeful examples of muddled statements and grammatical errors turned out as a result of some resolution passed at a meeting instructing the Secretary to make this or that protest, or write this or that person in a specified strain. It is no disgrace to acknowledge one's weakness in letter-writing and to consult some more expert member of the Party.

Incidentally, censorious letters are often ordered much too readily. Even Labour Party adherents might sometimes act differently if they understood some of the elements of British justice. How often is an out and out condemnation made on an *ex parte* or an unconfirmed statement made by some individual at a meeting. We have even known responsible and honoured officials challenged in their integrity on hearsay evidence. How much better sometimes for the Party to make investigations, or at least ask for observations regarding the statement made to it.

A Secretary of our acquaintance simplifies minutes in this way: he insists that every resolution shall be handed up to the Chairman in writing and provides slips of paper of a standard size for this purpose. No writing out of long involved resolutions for him! He just pastes the slips in his minute book, and if the latter *does* look like a scrap-book it, at any rate, is unchallengeable as to the wording of resolutions carried or lost.

Talking of minutes, some Secretaries could simplify their work here. It is altogether unnecessary to record in minutes the mover and seconder of each resolution. What matters, for purposes of record, is *the business which the meeting did*, i.e., whether a resolution was passed or no. A distinction must be drawn between the minute taker's notes and the minutes themselves. A minute taker for his own protection will record, if possible, the names of movers and seconders, and be able to produce same if the minutes are challenged. But it serves no useful purpose to record such names permanently.

We sympathise with the Secretary

who, called upon to write a letter to a public official or some other person, feels that the letter being hand-written stamps his Party, or himself, as being somewhat unimportant. Further, he may not be a good hand-writer. In our opinion the Secretary who has this feeling also generally has justification for it. Of course, nobody expects that each Ward Committee, Polling District Committee or Sub-Committee can have its own typewriter, but lots of men acting in these posts are able to use other typewriters in their possession, and the man who has not such facility feels small.

It is difficult to advise in such cases, though it must be said that a nicely written manuscript letter is infinitely to be preferred to the beastly typing some persons are guilty of, and which of itself stamps the author, and through him his Party, as being slipshod, dirty and ill-informed. Manuscript writers can at least try to make their letters readable (and therefore more welcome). They can score, too, by filling in such necessary items as name of Party, their own address, date, and by writing their name in block letters under their signature if the latter is unintelligible.

But why not get a typewriter? We know of some Parties which have raised substantial sums of money at every election since 1918 which still boggle at the expenditure of a few pounds on a second-hand machine. On the other hand, we know of even Ward Committees and small organisations that have had the pluck to invest in what to them is necessary equipment. And it has paid.

A hint to those who type. Why not make a tidy job of it? Study style. As a seasonable hint look at the suburban gardens in Spring. How tidy are most of the plots, and then one comes across the slovenly one. He is marked. So is the slovenly letter.

By studying the letters one receives, even the novice may discover a style to follow. Look at the margins, and note that the letter should square up to a decent margin; note the indentations in the addresses and the beginnings of paragraphs, and observe that ordinarily a system is observed of

(Please turn to page 68)

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SOME REPORTS AND BALANCE SHEETS

It is amusing, though it is sometimes distressing when studying L.L.P. reports, to note how the secretary-compiler glosses over the failures. Long experience has taught us what to look for in reports—definite membership figures; detailed election results; mention of the activities of Ward, Social and Propaganda Committees or of Local Labour Parties, etc.; the activities of Youth and Women, with specific mention rather than vague generalisation. The financial statement always conveys a lot, perhaps much more than the officers think, and if we look at some of the reports sent us with critical eye or mercifully spare mention of others, it is out of kindness. After all, most Parties have a long leeway to make up ere they become a pattern to others.

We have awaited with interest the Annual Report of the Woolwich Labour Party, for few Parties have achieved what Woolwich has done. What other Party could have survived when faced with liabilities amounting to over £4,000—a legacy left to the Woolwich L.P. on the winding up of the Pioneer Press Company in 1924? To-day the total liabilities of the Party amount to £360. The report rightly says “the strength of the Labour Party depends mainly on its individual members,” and income from members’ subscriptions is up £23 on 1934, amounting now to £719 14s. 7d.—the highest figure in Great Britain. Membership at the close of the year was 4,389, an increase of 134. During 1935, 601 new members were enrolled and lapsed members totalled 467, the majority of the lapses being due to removals out of the borough. It is worthy of note that notwithstanding that the Party has lost over 1,500 members due to removals during the last four years, the present Party individual membership is 1,109 higher than four years ago. Labour men and women everywhere should be proud of the Woolwich Labour Party, but though Woolwich is proud that the Move-

ment is represented by a Labour Member in Parliament, by four members on the L.C.C. and by forty Labour members on the Borough Council the Party is determined to continue to work on strengthening and consolidating the political organisation. That’s the spirit.

Mile End D.L.P. report a further increase last year from members’ subscriptions. The sum of £292 6s. 8d. was collected from this source. How the earnest work of organisation tells at election times is shown by the figures for the last four elections, for Labour gained a record poll in 1935. Accompanying the report is a list of collectors and amounts collected—Labour’s roll of honour, together with an analysis of membership giving comparative figures not only of growth, but of removals, deaths and lapses in each ward. A useful part of the analysis shows the number of members whose subscriptions amounted to 4s., 3s., 2s. and so on. A analysis of membership payments is in fact a highly valuable key to success, as will readily be seen on reflection.

That even in the distressed areas determination can conquer is shown by the report of the Aberavon Divisional Labour Party. Individual membership which was 572 in 1933 was 1,290 in 1935. The intensive activity now being shown is indicated by the number of Local Party meetings held during the year, these totalling no fewer than 230. The number of public meetings, however, seems surprisingly small (only 36) by comparison. Last year’s report is certainly a credit to the officers.

The Faversham D.L.P. are deserving of commendation. They are certainly marching on to future victory, and last October’s result brought the adverse majority within measurable dimensions. We expect them to win next time, and indeed no fewer than 221 M.P.’s were elected to Parliament with

less votes than were polled for Labour in Faversham. We are interested to note a detailed analysis of membership—there are now 1,843 members—and a financial statement, the details of which mostly speak of intensive activity.

Congratulations to the Cambridge Trades Council and Labour Party on a good year's report. This organisation is now entering upon the twenty-fifth year of its existence as a Labour Party, and the political fund account betokens an exercise of ability and enterprise which has triumphed over many intrinsic difficulties. It is interesting to note that in Cambridge ward collections totalled over £21, and that from normal sources the Party's political income totalled well over £300, excluding the Parliamentary account. There is a balance of £155 still lying in the Parliamentary election account, not to mention £62 in the Party's political account. The light blues surely are a careful sort, and they make good going!

It is becoming more and more the fashion to-day for Parties to present their reports in considerable detail and occupying several duplicated sheets. The West Fulham D.L.P. present last year's report in this form. The Party has yet the task of winning back the seat, and seems to be applying itself to this task in earnest. A membership campaign has been launched and 33 voluntary collectors have been enrolled. The Party publishes the West Fulham Labour Magazine, 10,000 copies of which are distributed each month. Undoubtedly, this effort has had much to do with the Party's Local Government successes.

The Twickenham Constituency Labour Party also present a report of several duplicated pages, and containing interesting data. Individual membership showed marked progress during the year, and the total now stands at 1,865, a nett increase of 120.

The York Labour Party report a substantial increase in individual membership, the total now standing at 1,148. We are glad to note that in several wards membership canvassing

is now regularly done, one evening a week being devoted to this task. Members' contributions are quaintly named "Bid for Power" contributions, and reach the sum of £143 9s. 8d., though an additional £9 11s. 1d. was paid into the office. A good deal of intensive work appears to be afoot in York at present.

It is always a pleasure to read the Annual Report and accounts of the Hendon Local Labour Party, and Hendon Constituency Labour Party, for by the same token which we mention in our opening paragraph, one is able to discern consistent effort and well planned work throughout the year. Indeed the reports are a model in some respects, inasmuch as they are presented in creditable form and detail, and mention all those things which we would desire to enquire about. A perusal of the report shows

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that there is interest in Party business by the members; and that the Party was active during the year both indoor and outdoor, and in almost every desirable direction; and that membership is growing, the total being 1,600. Last year the Party took its part in the Victory for Socialism campaign; it had a Christmas bazaar; it bought a Loud Speaker apparatus, and it supplies the "Labour Organiser" to Party Secretaries and others. The accounts themselves disclose several interesting and instructive sidelights; the Co-op. Guild have been roped in and so apparently have two Co-op. Councils and the Harrow Trades Council. There is a useful little item of income from the use of the duplicator and the various Local Parties appear to be stumping up for central services rendered. There was a profit of £60 odd on the Christmas bazaar—quite a good effort. Unfortunately we have not the space to point out several other features of the accounts which strike us as being commendable, though we shall not fail to put this report in our attaché case to use as an illustration and example when visiting Local Parties.

(Concluded from page 64)

starting each paragraph (or of indenting each line of an address) by so many spaces. This wonderfully improves the appearance. Look at the space between paragraphs and generally before beginning the letter try and size up what it will "make," i.e., centre the letter in the paper if a short one and double space; a long one might be single spaced and would commence higher up the paper.

Don't tolerate dirty letters. Some ribbons seem to pull readily and clog up the letters. Avoid these types of ribbons (they are mostly the heavy inked ones) and keep the letters clean. A stiff brush is all that is needed, though sometimes a drop of petrol on the brush will improve matters. One letter out of alignment can give a terribly higgledy-piggledy appearance to a letter. This is a job for the typewriter shop, and it pays to get repairs done without delay. There is nothing at all to be gained by buying cheap ribbons nor cheap stationery. The man

with a typewriter is able to "carbon-copy" his correspondence, and this proves useful. Don't forget to sign a typed letter. It is bad taste to type one's name in instead of writing it, but it is commonsense to type one's name, besides signing it, if the signature is illegible—unless, of course, the name is printed in the heading.

Talking of letter-heads reminds one that Borough Labour Parties in Divided Boroughs and Constituency Parties in County Divisions could quite well have supplies of suitable stationery for their local units run off when printing their own matter. Even the smallest unit feels more important and gets to work better as a result of this little attention.

Did you read the articles entitled "Let Us Build" in our last and preceding issues? If not please turn to them at once. Can we not get our Parties building everywhere?

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MEMBERSHIP RULES

A MODEL TO WORK ON

We are greatly indebted to Mr. A. Rose, of Southampton, for the following rules, governing individual membership, which are worked in that town. We are confident that these rules will be of considerable service to a number of our readers, some of whom have been enquiring for this sort of thing.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS.

Enrolment.

1. Each new member shall be required to sign an enrolment form issued by the Party.

Membership.

2. A person shall not be deemed an Individual Member of the Party unless he or she holds a current card of membership.

Lapsed Members.

3. Lapsed members shall be those who cease to hold a current card of membership and/or, are more than three months in arrears with contributions, except in cases where it is known that such arrears of contributions will be received.

Contributions.

4. A receipt shall be given for all contributions by means of contribution stamps to the value of the amount paid, which shall be affixed to the member's card. No other form of receipt shall be valid. The minimum contribution shall be 1d. per week.

Excusal of Payment.

5. Upon the recommendation of a Collector the payment of a member's contributions may be excused for not more than 12 weeks at one time, by the Ward Association Executive Committee, and no member shall be lapsed in respect of any period so excused. All excusals shall be reported at the end of each month to the Central Contribution Secretary, and shall be shown on form M.4. as "contributions excused." The member's card shall be marked with an "E" in respect of every week excused.

In the event of any dispute, the matter shall be referred to the Central Executive Committee whose decision shall be final.

Ward Contribution Secretary.

6. There shall be one Contribution Secretary in each Ward whose duties shall be as follow:—

- (a) Organise collection of contributions within the Ward on a weekly basis as far as possible. To aim at maintaining an average of one collector for each 15 members.
- (b) Enter all contributions received in the Ward Contribution Register.
- (c) Remit to Central Contribution Secretary as soon as possible after the last day in each month all contributions received less one quarter (25 per cent.) of the total amount.

The amount so retained shall, where a Women's Section has been established in accordance with the Rules of the Party, be divided as follows:—

To the Women's Section, one-half of the amount retained in respect of the total contributions paid by women members.

To the Ward Association, the remainder.

- (d) To send Collectors' Monthly Reports and the Contribution Secretary's Monthly Report with cash remitted to Central Contribution Secretary.
- (e) Send weekly to Central Contribution Secretary new enrolment forms duly completed, so that letters of welcome can be issued to new members at once.
- (f) Obtain all membership cards, forms, stamps, etc., from Central Contribution Secretary.
- (g) Deal with all general matters affecting members' contributions.

Collectors.

7. Collectors shall receive a Collector's Book from their Ward Contribution Secretary, in which they shall record, under the heading of the month in which contributions are re-

ceived, all contributions paid to them. As soon as possible after the last payments are due each month, the Collector shall prepare a Monthly Report (form M.4) which shall be handed to the Contribution Secretary together with all contributions collected. New members' enrolment forms shall be handed to the Contribution Secretary at the end of each week.

General.

8. All Individual Members, both men and women, must be members of a Ward Association.

In addition, women members are automatically members of the Women's Section where a Women's Section has been established and such establishment has received the endorsement of the Women's Central Committee and the Central Executive Committee.

The Ward Association Secretary should maintain by arrangement with the Contribution Secretary a list of all members in the Ward, both men

and women, and should keep such list up to date so that all members may be notified of meetings, etc.

The Women's Section Secretary should maintain by arrangement with the Ward Contribution Secretary a list of all women members, and should keep such list up to date so that all members may be notified of meetings etc.

Secretaries of Women's Sections shall be entitled to collect contributions at meetings of the Section, and for this purpose shall be regarded as collectors.

Any point in these rules upon which dispute arises or any point not covered by these rules shall be referred to the Central Executive Committee for a decision.

Nothing in these rules shall be considered as in any way altering or amending the existing General Rules of the Party.

(Affiliated members are referred to in Rules Clause Iv. (2) (3) (4), Cl. x., Cl. xiii. (3)).

SIMPLE LAW & FACT FOR BEGINNERS

Article I

In these articles I am going to suppose that you, dear reader, are a beginner in political organisation. You are keen and eager about the work.

Maybe you will become a local Candidate, perhaps an Organiser, and in any case you feel you would like to be able to conduct elections, to conduct them efficiently, and in accordance with law, and to be able to advise your Party and your workers on what is right and wrong.

There are hundreds — probably thousands — of men and women in the Labour Party in this frame of mind, and the Labour Party needs thousands of workers qualified as you would be qualified if your ambitions are fulfilled. So we begin these articles, which are not intended for the skilled practitioner, for only those such as you who desire to learn and to begin at the beginning.

In these articles we are simply not going to burden you with unnecessary information, or with involved statements of the law, nor shall we use legal phrases if we can help it. We just want to tell you plainly and in simple language those things about election law which it is essential you should know if you are to conduct local elections and to fulfil an important position at a Parliamentary election.

If you have ambitions to become a Labour agent (and these posts are open to women as well as men), these articles will not suffice. Nor indeed do we suggest that they will suffice for you for long. Our Party require men or women of special training, and the person who desires to serve our Movement best must therefore read more than these articles — must read the rest of the paper, back

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copies, future copies, perhaps take special training as opportunities afford, and certainly buy one or two of the simpler books on election law or Local Government.

The person who aspires to become an agent is reminded that the Labour Party holds examinations and grants certificates to would-be agents. There is a course of postal training to go through, generally lasting about twelve months, after which there is a written and an oral examination, the former designed mainly to test the student's knowledge and the latter designed chiefly to test the student's suitability and experience.

* * *

There are two ideas that you must first of all get out of your head. The first is that one can conduct elections without any special knowledge, and the second is that such special knowledge is difficult to acquire and is beyond the scope of a person educated in an elementary school.

Self-confidence is an admirable thing in public life, but self-sufficiency is another matter, and though the law is comparatively simple lack of knowledge may be attended with dire results.

Nobody of average intelligence need fear that the intricacies of election law are beyond them. In the main the provisions for holding elections are sensible, and what one might expect, and in the main also British election law is a credit to its authors, notwithstanding that lots of provisions are now out of date and could be improved upon.

* * *

Please do not begin by buying books. We shall mention books in due course. But the apprentice at the mills is not given the opportunity to monkey with the jigsaw. Election books are like what—you can get a mighty bad mental indigestion from inexperienced use.

What is much more important is to get a mental picture of English Local Government. The N.C.L.C. has a Postal Course, which is free to the members of certain organisations. Messrs. Pitman also publish a useful work by J. J. Clarke, M.A., "Outline of Local Government of the United Kingdom," price 5s., with a larger book on the same subject at 12s. 6d.

From a study of Local Government the townsman and the countryman

both begin to realise that there still remains a substantial difference between the Local Governing bodies in their respective areas. Those bodies for which local elections are held are as follow:—

1. **County Boroughs.** County Boroughs are the highest form of local governing body to be found in this country. A County Borough is both an administrative County and a Borough, and subject, of course, to Imperial law it is supreme within its area. There are no district councils nor parish councils in the areas of Borough Councils.

2. **County Councils.** County Councils have been set up for all the areas outside County Boroughs. The dominions of County Councils mostly correspond with the geographical counties, though in a few instances, such as Yorkshire, geographical counties have been divided.

County Councils do not exercise the same powers within their area as County Boroughs, but they are nevertheless very powerful bodies and exercise a good deal of control over non-County Boroughs, Urban and Rural Councils and the Parish Councils within their area.

The London County Council is, of course, an exceptional body set up under a special statute, and there are no Rural Districts or Parish Council elections in London. There are instead "Metropolitan Boroughs"—Councils which have not got quite the status of an ordinary Borough Council, but have a higher status than the Urban and Rural District Councils.

3. **Non-County Boroughs.** A Borough is a body with a Mayor and Corporation, and subject to the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. Some Non-County Boroughs are of considerable importance, such as Dudley, but others are of small account though of ancient lineage, such as Higham Ferrers, and are overshadowed by neighbouring Urban Councils of greater importance, but lesser status. The powers of Borough Councils vary. In a number of matters the Borough Council is subject to the County Council.

4. **Urban District Councils.** Quite a lot of Urban Districts are of considerable size and importance, and like the non-County Boroughs powers vary roughly according to the population. There is often a striving in the large

Urban areas to secure the dignity of a Borough and to be able to boast of a Mayor and Corporation. In a number of matters the Urban District Council is subject to the rule of the County Council.

5. **Rural District Councils.** One can liken a Rural District Council to a Constituency Labour Party for their areas are generally far flung, and, as the name indicates, rural in character. Outside the Boroughs and Urban Districts of Great Britain the Parish Council is still an important unit in Local Government and definitely functions. Rural District Councils consist of what we will call for the sake of convenience, delegates from its component Parishes.

The rural district councils have been shorn latterly of some of their former powers, and they are, of course, subject in a number of matters to the superior rule of the County Council.

6. **Parish Councils.** We have already referred to the existence of parishes, and where there is a population of over three hundred a Parish Council must be set up. Other parishes (except those over 100 and which may obtain a Council) have no Council but are given a "Parish Meeting" instead. The meeting, of course, consists of every parochial elector in the parish, and not of elected persons. Parishes may be divided into Wards, and frequently parishes are grouped either for the purpose of electing a Parish Council or representatives to the U.D.C.

* * *

The above enumeration will serve for the moment, for have we not advised you, dear reader, to read up the question of Local Government to get the "hang" of the thing?

We have not suggested that you should read up anything concerning the Imperial Parliament to get the hang of that, for its working and the division of the country into constituencies is generally well known. But if a book is required we can recommend "Parliament, What It Is and How It Works," Pitman and Sons, Price 2s. 6d.

The enquirer may be anxious to know how his constituency came to be created, and where is laid down a delimitation of its boundaries. Parliamentary constituencies are created by Act of Parliament, nowadays by Redistribution Acts, and

the last one was the Representation of the People Act 1918.

The boundaries of constituencies in 1918 were laid down following the recommendations of a Speaker's Conference and a Commission. The unit of population represented by one Member was taken at 70,000, but Boroughs with not less than 50,000 inhabitants kept their separate representation.

A full list of constituencies and the areas which they comprise is to be found in the ninth schedule to the Representation of the People Act, 1918.

* * *

We perhaps have now said enough for our first article. The reader should get that picture of Local Government well into his mind to be ready for further lessons. We will summarise the matter for the moment by pointing out that nowadays, apart from Parliament, there are separate elections for the following bodies only:—

1. Municipal Boroughs (County and non-County).
2. County Councils.
3. Metropolitan Borough Councils.
4. Urban and Rural District Councils.
5. Parish Councils.

(To be continued).

VACANCY ON PARISH COUNCIL

Question. A vacancy through death having occurred on a local Parish Council, and the fact that at the ordinary elections there were only sufficient nominations to fill the seven seats has resulted in the question of correct procedure being raised.

The Clerk states that his information is that the Parish Council must make the Nomination, or Nominations, and determine by their vote who shall serve. This removes any right of the electors to determine the position.

I have got "Provisional Rules and Orders, 1934" but they do not appear to make any reference to the point, and seeing that the Parish Council is a joint body, i.e., 6 from one ward and 7 from the other, the 6 seem to me to be ruled out from any voting power.

The usual procedure is for the next highest of those nominated to be elected, and I feel that there must be some method which gives the electors

(Please turn to page 75)

A SEARCHLIGHT ON—

ADVERTISEMENT

AN ART WE MUST UNDERSTAND

Article 2

AND LEARN TO APPLY

It would be quite as well if readers, before reading this article, turned to refresh their memories from the article on this subject in our February issue.

In that number we showed that advertisement was now a trade, an industry and a profession, alongside which the older art of individual advertisement still prevailed. We should like now to take our readers on a visit to both fields so that we may pick up what lessons we may.

Advertisement is a necessity in modern society. Who among the herded millions would be seen or noticed but for his advertisement? What Movement, too, stands a chance of growing, in our complex society, without publicity?

And let no one suppose that even under a Socialist State advertisement will be non-existent. Russia itself trains and teaches its masses—by advertisement. In all societies but the smallest and least civilised, messages, appeals, persuasions, commands must go forth. And the medium for all such is advertisement.

An advertising expert writing a few days ago from his own trade angle gave utterance to a thought which is striking confirmation of what we have just said, and shows that the brainiest men in advertising ranks are thinking about the future of their industry.

The writer, who possibly is a Socialist, looks with unconcern on the future. He thinks apparently in terms of state propaganda, and he advocates the establishment of a National Advertising Laboratory where scientifically trained people would collect from every corner the results of advertising, analyse them and develop principles of advertisement construction. Read advertisement as propaganda and one gets the writer's meaning and argument better.

And now, when advertising experts are themselves looking forward and

admit that "our major industries are clearly headed either for nationalisation or for self-managed national corporations according to the swing of the electoral pendulum," it is cogent to ask what note Labour is taking of this matter.

Are we assimilating anything of the arts of advertisement? Have we noticed the big thing that has grown up in modern society, and have we envisaged the fact that Labour must shout or be lost, advertise or be damned? Or that a ministry of propaganda is an almost inevitable development of the immediate future? Indeed, did we not see the embryo in the closing months of the last Parliament?

Let us stand back a moment to view the elevation. Having done so, let us hide our heads in shame, for are we not, as a Party, innocents abroad in a world of guile and advertisement? Advertisement to the right of us—advertisement to the left of us—advertisement in front of us—and most all of it has a trend which is subtly hostile to our viewpoint or passively negative to it. We leave out of count the active propaganda which is anti-Socialist or political.

The great task before Labour is to *understand* advertisement, and to apply its learning in the right manner and to its own advantage. Advertisement of the sort we have in mind is not that which comes through the agencies, and which business firms speak of as an advertisement "appropriation." It is the magic art of advertising ourselves, in which we must begin at the beginning.

Not so long ago a certain firm shocked the denizens of Leeds with a Neon sign of a dancing girl. Neon, nude and rude, was one description of what after all was merely the firm's trademark. What we are pointing to is that the cost of the sign was

negligible compared with the value of the free advertisement, which the storm provoked.

Don't run away with the notion that we advocate imitation. We merely point the lesson that advertisement value is a subtle and almost immeasurable thing. It certainly is not intrinsic to its cost.

Before we leave this subject for a month let us give one other illustration, which has stamped itself indelibly upon our memory.

The Labour Party opens the doors of its Annual Conference to press and public. The Annual Conference of the Labour Party has, in fact, a tremendous advertisement value. Notwithstanding misrepresentations by the press, and the attacks of its enemies, the conception of a great earnest Movement striving for political power and social betterment, has got before the public in years gone by.

Now for our illustration.

In 1931 the whole world was thrilled with the thought of a coming General Election in Great Britain. Labour, which had held office for two years and eight months was in the world's eye. It had not yet lost the election, and certainly the country's mind was not as it was when the polls were declared. Labour's ranks were filled with a strange exalted feeling. The Party was like a person who had come through the Valley of the Shadow. Above all it thirsted, nay yearned, for something which would come, shall we say, as a light in the sky?

It was in this atmosphere that the Party Conference met at Scarborough. The captains and the kings were there; all the world and his wife looked on. The press came—in plenty; the public came—in droves; and when the Conference opened the stage was set for a scene that would be history, thrilling and inspiring, to those taking part. In short, the Party Conference had such an opportunity as rarely comes.

The beginning was well, but ere the morning was half through the anticlimax came. The great show flickered, faded and shut up. Not so the fools and blind. They opened up. For the Conference had begun to consider the Executive Report and all the mundane details thereof. 'Twas like Nero fiddling while Rome burned. The little men of Labour seized their

opportunity for petty scenes and protests—Mr. Chairman this, and Mr. Chairman that! A blight descended; and well—it lasted!

We have always thought that that morning damaged Labour immeasurably. If it didn't, at any rate it showed that Labour did not know *when* to advertise or *how* to dress its stage.

We of the "L.O." are not too proud to learn of our enemies. Would some of them in the world's eye to-day have neglected opportunities like that?

(To be continued).

(Concluded from page 73)

the right to nominate and your observations will be appreciated.

Answer. It does not appear to be generally known that there are no "By-elections" for Parish Councils in the same way that one may get a "By-election" when a vacancy occurs for a Parliamentary seat or a seat on the County Council, Borough or District Council.

Section 67 (6) of the Local Government Act 1933, reads as follows:—"A casual vacancy among Parish Councillors shall be filled by the Parish Council, and the Council shall forthwith be convened for the purpose of filling the vacancy."

The above provision is virtually a re-enactment of Section 47 (4) of the Local Government Act, 1894. It is provided (L.G.A. Section 68) that a person so elected to fill a casual vacancy is to hold office until the date upon which the former holder would have retired.

The Annual Report, but not the statement of accounts, of the Sunderland D.L.P. is to hand. We note that this is the fifty-third Annual Report, which causes one to think furiously. Was it not Sunderland which early returned Tom Summerbell as its Labour M.P.? Labour has now a majority on the Council, and 2,902 individual members to back it. This is a slight decrease on last year, ground which we are sure our friends will recover this year. The Party is striving for a minimum of 5,000 members paying not less than one penny per week, and it is making a bold appeal for this number.

OUR DIRECTORY PAGE

OFFICIAL LIST OF ALTERATIONS (SUPPLIED BY THE LABOUR PARTY) IN THE SECRETARIES OF CONSTITUENCY AND CENTRAL LABOUR PARTIES. (LABOUR AGENTS WILL APPEAR NEXT MONTH.)

We have pleasure in announcing a new feature in "Labour Organiser" service to its readers. By the courtesy of the Labour Party we shall publish each month a complete list of any alterations that have taken place in the previous month among the constituency secretaries and agents of the Party. As our readers are aware, a complete and revised list is published at the time of each annual Conference, but the number of alterations made during a year rapidly make the published list out of date. Last month we published a complete list of all alterations made since October, 1935, and we shall publish each month in addition to further alterations a complete list of all alterations that have already been published, giving the index letters and figures only, together with a reference to our own pages. Thus, any month's issue of the "L.O." will serve as an accurate guide to Labour Party secretaries, etc. Will readers please note that notification of alterations must be sent not to us but to the Labour Party. It should also be noted that some entries may register quite minor corrections, and that entry in this list does not necessarily indicate that a change of secretary has taken place.

KEY TO INDEX LETTERS REPRESENTING LABOUR PARTY ORGANISING DISTRICTS.

A North-Eastern District	F South-Western District
B North-Western District	G Eastern District
C Midlands District	H Wales
D Southern and Home Counties District	J Scotland
E London District	K Universities

KEY TO NATURE OF CONSTITUENCY.

(CD) County Divisions	(DB) Divisional Boroughs
(SB) Single-membered Boroughs	(BD) Borough Divisions
(DMB) Double-membered Boroughs	(U) Universities

CORRECTIONS REGISTERED IN OUR MARCH ISSUE

D4	F50	F101	D141	B174	G216	E263/5	C330	C403	A451	H507	J564
D6	F51	C104	D143	B182/4	G220	E270	F341	B407	A456	J516	J568
B16	F55	D109	B149	B184	E227	E277	C362	C415	H475	J542	J572
B24	A61	D113	B152	B193	E230	D283	G367	A433	H480	J543	J574
C36	G78	D116	B155	B196	E236	D299	G368	A437	H482	J551	K584
C44	G82	D127	B162	B201	E241	G300	D381	A440/	H484	J552	K585/6
F48	G02	D131	B163	C209	E257	G303	D389	446	H503	J554	
F49	G94	D138	B165	G213	E259	A318A	C398	A441	H506	J563	

CORRECTIONS RECEIVED SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

<i>Index</i>	<i>Descrip-</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>tion</i>	<i>Name of Organisation</i>	<i>Present Secretary and Address</i>
C36	DMB	Derby	D.L.P.	Coun. H. J. T. RUSSELL, 29 Charnwood St., Derby.	
F57	CD	Dorset (Nth.)	D.L.P.	Mr. R. MARSH, "Hazeldene," Rixon, Sturminster Newton, Dorset.	
G83	BD	Walthamstow East	D.L.P.	Mr. E. M. WILLIAMS, 342 Hoe St., Walthamstow, London, E.17.	
G85	BD	Plaistow	D.L.P.	Mr. S. J. WARREN, 433 Barking Rd., Plaistow, London, E.13.	
D115	CD	Fareham	D.L.P.	Mr. S. S. JORDAN, 2 Mill Pond Rd., Gosport, Hants.	
B166/175	DB	Manchester	(Borough) L.P.	Mr. COLLINGSON, 32 King St. West, Manchester, Lancs.	
B171	BD	Hulme	D.L.P.	Mr. F. J. WADE, 139 Princess Rd., Manchester, 14, Lancs.	
G213	SB	Grimsby	D.L.P.	Mr. E. CLARKE, Back of 71 Grimsby Rd., Cleethorpes, Lincs.	

G218 CD	Brigg D.L.P.	Mr. E. KENNEDY, 63 West Common Lane, Old Brumby, Scunthorpe, Lincs.
E226/27 DB	Bethnal Green (Borough) T.C. & L.P.	Coun. J. E. A. KING, 293 Cambridge Rd., Bethnal Green, London, E.2.
E243 BD	Hammersmith (South) D.L.P.	Mr. L. TURNER, 18 Eyot Gardens, Hammersmith, London, W.6.
E247 BD	Islington (North) D.L.P.	Mr. H. C. LITTLEWOOD, 19 Gresley Rd., London, N.19.
E249 BD	Islington (West) D.L.P.	Mr. W. G. SCOTT, 318, Caledonian Rd., London, N.1.
E263 BD	St. Pancras (North) D.L.P.	Mr. E. P. BELL, 293 Kentish Town Rd., London, N.W.5.
E264 BD	St. Pancras (S.E.) D.L.P.	Mr. T. S. NEWTON, St. Jude's Hall, 77 Wicklow St., King's Cross, London, W.C.1.
G302 CD	Norfolk (East) D.L.P.	Mr. B. HAZELL, 57 Bethel St., Norwich, Norfolk.
C310 CD	Peterboro' D.L.P.	Coun. J. MANSFIELD, J.P., Alexandra Rd., Peter- borough, Northants.
A313 BD	Newcastle (Central) D.L.P.	Mr. A. LOUVRE, 87 Percy St., Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northumberland.
C323 BD	Nottingham (East) D.L.P.	Coun. T. R. SCOTT, 21 Devon St., Carlton Rd., Nottingham.
C330 CD	Rushcliffe D.L.P.	Mrs. P. STAMPER, 69 Portland Rd., West Bridg- ford, Nottingham.
D372 SB	Kingston-on- Thames D.L.P.	Mrs. G. H. LOMAN, 3 Claremont Gardens, Surbiton, Surrey.
D378 CD	Farnham D.L.P.	Mr. W. F. SHEPHERD, Labour Hall, Clarence Avenue, Woking, Surrey.
D384 CD	Eastbourne T.C. & L.P.	Miss B. B. KELLY, 71a Royal Parade, Eastbourne, Sussex.
C397 BD	Ladywood D.L.P.	Mr. W. SIMON, 35 Gillott Rd., Edgbaston, Bir- mingham, 16, Warwicks.
B407 CD	Westmorland D.L.P.	Mr. W. RIGG, 17 Castle Oval, Kendal, Westmor- land.
C414 CD	Bewdley D.L.P.	Mrs. L. E. LAWLEY, Breedene, Somer's Park Avenue, Malvern Link, Worcs.
A445 BD	Hillsborough D.L.P.	Mr. ELLIS WILSON, 249 Burgoyne Rd., Sheffield, 6, Yorks.
A448 SB	York D.L.P.	Mr. A. E. FENNA, 2 Railway St., York.
A454 CD	Scarborough & Whitby D.L.P.	Mr. G. T. DOBSON, Lansbury Hotel, Scarborough, Yorks.
A471 CD	Skipton D.L.P.	Mr. J. NICHOL, 9 Kirkstall Grove, Fairweather Green, Bradford, Yorks.
H482 CD	Denbigh D.L.P.	Mr. L. EVANS, Ferndene, Sea View Road, Colwyn Bay, Denbighs.
H487 BD	Cardiff (South) D.L.P.	Mr. T. E. DAVIES, 101 Corporation Rd., Cardiff, Glam.
J570 CD	Perth D.L.P.	Mr. D. FINNEY, 22 Cromlex Rd., Friarton, Perth.

THE L.O.—“OKS” AHEAD

READ THIS :

In 1930 the “L.O.” published the list of Reforms reprinted on page 78, never before published or compiled.

Three years later the L.G. Act put some of these proposals on the Statute Book.

In 1930 we advocated the holding of Local Elections in May.

To-day—six years later—the Association of Municipal Corporations supports our demand.

THESE ARE TWO EXAMPLES ONLY—THERE ARE MANY OTHERS—THE
“L.O.” ALWAYS “LO”—“OKS” AHEAD.

REDISTRIBUTION AND ELECTORAL REFORM

An important debate took place in the House of Commons on Wednesday, 5th February, on a Private Member's Motion, which was as follows: "That in view of the changing distribution of the electorate the question of the redistribution of seats should receive the careful consideration of H.M. Government."

An interesting debate resulted in the course of which some interesting figures were quoted. Not the least weighty of the arguments presented by those who desire redistribution was the fact that the legal maximum for Romford was something like £3,300, and that there were other constituencies the legal maximum in which was below £700.

Nobody was found to oppose redistribution, and nobody we suppose cared to express the view which we hold, i.e., that the Tories are not to be trusted with this job. The arguments for redistribution are of course, irresistible, but the reason we put forward that the Tories cannot be trusted is immovable. So we must wait to see what happens.

It cannot be said that Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd, who replied to the Debate for the Government, held out any definite promise other than that of careful consideration. What he did point to was that rearrangements of local areas was still going on under the Local Government Act, of 1929, and that while this process proceeded redistribution was precluded.

* * *

A matter which will greatly concern our readers is the fact that many speakers desired to introduce the question of other necessary and more urgent reforms in our electoral system, but were precluded from doing so by the Speaker's vigilance.

The Rt. Hon. F. O. Roberts, speaking on behalf of the Labour Party, did make the point that he hoped other immediate reforms would be considered as well, and the possibility of this Government undertaking a measure of electoral reform is not to be overlooked.

Our readers will recollect that considerable attention has been given to

this matter in our pages, and a series of articles appeared in 1930. Investigations were also carried out by the Agents' Union.

It is timely to recall that in our view the Labour Party has no public policy on this question, and we feel it is time that the Movement made up its mind on certain matters, and that the Annual Conference had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the whole matter. It may be a minor point, but an expression which Mr. Roberts got in during the debate was that he hoped for a more frequent issue of the electors' registers. Now does our Party really stand for this (with the delays and anomalies which still obtained when we had two registers a year) or would the Movement approve of the "Labour Organiser" proposal for one register a year and *continuous registration*, i.e., registration by notification to the registration officer?

There are many similar matters, most of them of far greater importance on which the Movement ought to have a decided policy. We make no apology for again presenting our readers with a list of the reforms we advocate, and which were summarised in our issue for May, 1930, from which we reprint. In only one or two very minor matters have our views on these suggestions undergone any change.

Summary of Proposals.

- PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION: Opposed.
- SECOND BALLOT AND ALTERNATIVE VOTE: Opposed.
- REFERENDUM: Repeal of present application to town polls proposed.
- REFERENDUM: Enquiry favoured as to effect of referendum on certain classes of measures introduced in late life of any Parliament.
- SEPARATE UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATION: Abolition.
- PLURAL VOTING: Abolition.
- CODIFICATION OF LAWS AFFECTING FRANCHISE AND MACHINERY OF ELECTIONS: Proposed.

ASSIMILATION OF PROCEDURE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: Proposed.

VOTERS' QUALIFICATION: Three months' residence qualification proposed, as a universal franchise for Parliamentary and Local Government purposes.

PROPERTY AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS: Abolition.

REGISTRATION: Half-yearly register proposed or continuous system of registration.

QUALIFICATION FOR LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES: Abolition of present dissimilarities proposed, the qualification urged being twelve months' residence or registration as elector in the area.

DISQUALIFICATIONS: Uniformity proposed for all Local Governing bodies.

RETURNING OFFICER: Uniformity of authority and function proposed for all classes of elections, including power of casting vote. Compulsion to transact all business in a Parliamentary election within the constituency.

NOMINATIONS: Similarity of form and procedure as far as practicable. Assentors held unnecessary.

PROCEDURE ON OBJECTIONS TO NOMINATIONS: To be provided for and uniform in all elections. Returning officer to have power to decide on qualification, subject to appeal to County Court Judge.

TIMES FOR ELECTIONS AND OFFICIAL PROCEDURE: To be uniform. Calculations of time to be the same for all purposes.

1st May suggested as date for Municipal and all other Local Government Elections.

CASUAL VACANCIES: Uniformity required regarding same.

PARLIAMENTARY BY - ELECTIONS: Not to be held within specified period of dissolution.

EXTENSION OF POLLING HOURS ACT: To apply in all elections.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT, 1908: To apply to all elections.

PROVISION FOR USE OF SCHOOLS AT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: To be amended and strengthened. Free use of Schools to apply in all elections.

[This has now been enacted. See L.G. Act, 1933.—Ed. "L.O."]
PROVISION OF POLLING

STATIONS: Candidates dissatisfied with provision and distribution to have right of appeal to County Court Judge. The latter to have power to amend arrangements. In Rural Districts one station at least for every two hundred and fifty electors.

EXTENSION OF POLLING BY POST AND TRAVELLING POLLING STATIONS: Not favoured. Absent voters to have power of voting at a Parliamentary Election at any station in the country as in Australia. Delay in declaration involved.

POLLING AGENTS: Uniformity as to number allowed.

MACHINE VOTING: Introduction of machines for voting and counting advocated.

PENDING INTRODUCTION OF MACHINES: Definite instructions as to method of counting.

SECRECY: Penalty on Presiding Officer proposed if marking of paper is observable.

COUNTING AGENTS: Number allowed not to be at discretion of Returning Officer. Should be fixed by statute on basis of one candidate's agent to two official counters. Counting to take place *under observation* (not merely presence of candidates' agents).

RECOUNTS: Candidates who show to satisfaction of R.O. reasonable ground to doubt the accuracy of the count, to have right of recount.

SCRUTINY: Candidates to have statutory right to demand scrutiny where total of spoilt or tendered votes exceeds the majority by which any successful candidate would otherwise be declared elected.

CUSTODY OF BALLOT BOXES OR MACHINES: To be provided for.

ELECTION PETITIONS: Cost of petitions to be charged on public funds after petitioner proves a *prima facie* case. Petitions to be heard on circuit. Local Government petitions to be heard in County Court.

PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR MEMBERS ON LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES: Proposed for all bodies.

ABOLITION OF ALDERMEN ON BOROUGH COUNCILS, COUNTY COUNCILS, AND METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS: Proposed.

ASSIMILATION OF CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION IN

LONDON GOVERNMENT: Proposed.

COMPULSORY PUBLICATION OF DETAILED BALANCE SHEETS BY POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS: Official form of return to be prescribed.

CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES: To be the same as far as practicable for all classes of elections.

RETURN OF ELECTION EXPENSES: Proposed in all elections with simplified form for local government elections.

PAYMENT OF ELECTION EXPENSES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS: To be through named agent if agent appointed.

LIMIT OF EXPENDITURE: To be fixed for all elections.

REDUCTION OF PRESENT PARLIAMENTARY SCALE: Proposed.

NUMBER OF PAID CLERKS, MESSENGERS, ETC.: Number at present allowable to be reduced.

CANDIDATES' PERSONAL EXPENSES: Reduction proposed with maximum of £50.

BILLPOSTING: Prohibition of, other than candidate's address.

BILL DISTRIBUTORS: Payment of to be legalised.

PURCHASE OF PARTY FAVOURS FOR RE-SALE: To be legalised.

CONVEYANCE OF ELECTORS: Proposed prohibition of use of cars for conveying electors to the poll. Proposal that cars may be loaned to Returning Officer for use at his discretion disapproved.

RELAYING OF SPEECHES: Cost to be borne proportionately by every candidate utilizing facilities. No person other than candidates or agents to make use of relaying facilities.

BROADCASTING: To be prohibited except under B.B.C. arrangement.

TREATING: Law to be amended in order that corrupt intent should be presumed where it is shown that food or drink is given away at election times.

LICENSED PREMISES: To be closed on polling day in Parliamentary election.

PUBLIC HOLIDAY ON POLLING DAY: Not approved.

USE OF LICENSED PREMISES FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: To be prohibited.

USE OF POLITICAL CLUBS IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS FOR MEETING AND COMMITTEE ROOM PURPOSES: To be prohibited and brought into line with Local Government procedure.

JACK CUTTER SAYS—

Why will so many Registration Officers insist on sticking to the old-fashioned style of alphabetical make-up in their Registers?

You know the sort of thing; there are two families named Smith in the village—Charlie and Mary Smith at "Rose Cottage" and Bob and Lizzie Smith at "Lavender Cottage." They appear on the Register in this order:—

Smith Charles, Rose Cottage.

Smith, Elizabeth, Lavender Cottage.

Smith, Mary, Rose Cottage.

Smith, Robert, Lavender Cottage.

The qualifications of Charlie and Bob are as identical as those of Lizzie and Mary and we have only the address to give us any guidance as to whose wife is who. Sometimes we have not even that guidance. If, as often happens, cottages in a village are unnamed and the village has many families of the same name, the Agent who wishes to economise by sending an election address in one envelope addressed to man and wife is faced with an impossible task.

I have even seen an alphabetical Register for a polling district which is now part of an urban district, with street names, numbered houses and a 30-mile limit! Not so long ago it was a quiet village and here is a Registration Officer who apparently thinks it still is and is content to persist in his out-of-date method, oblivious to the inconvenience and extra work it causes to Agents, postal sorters, his staff and himself.

Even in small hamlets and in the Registration of scattered farmsteads is there any valid reason why families should not be grouped together on the Register? I do not see that it would cause any great difficulties to the presiding officer at the Polling Booth and it would make things a great deal easier for everyone else concerned.